

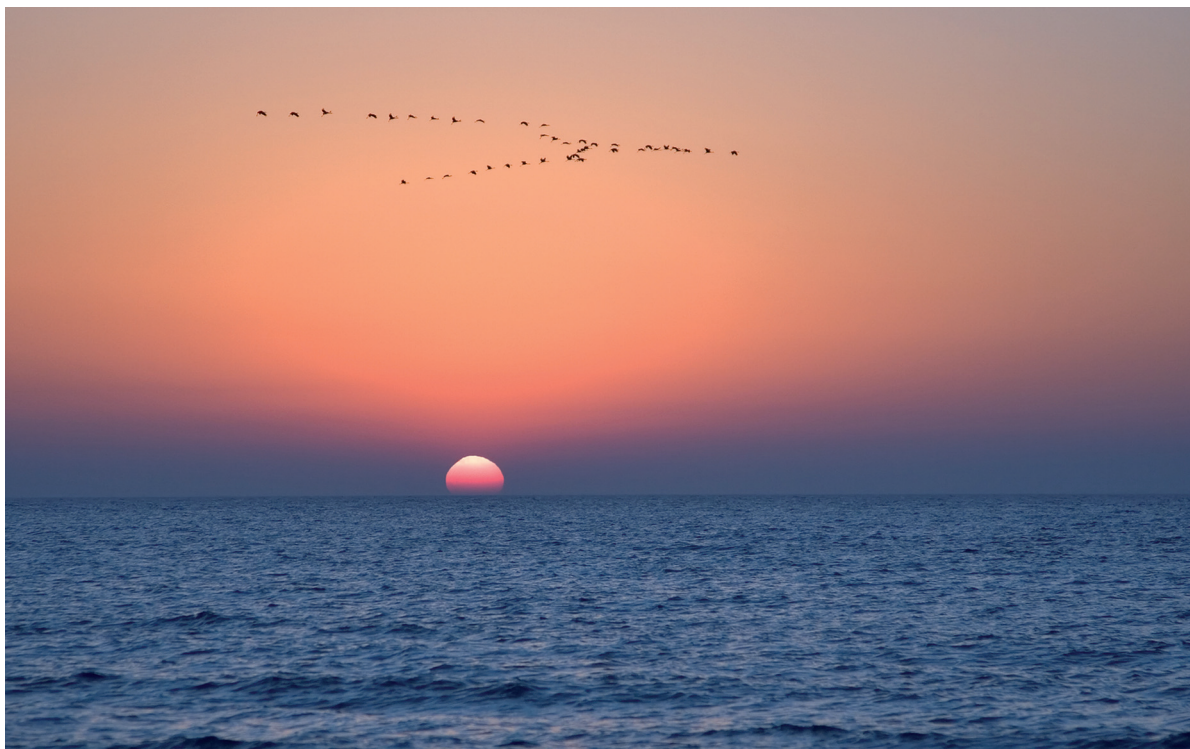
# NORTH INDIAN OCEAN AND RED SEA

THE UNCERTAIN SAFETY SITUATION in the Gulf of Aden and around the Horn of Africa, the prolonged conflict in Sri Lanka, the absence of facilities in India and the Maldives, the more attractive cruising destinations in the South Indian Ocean, have resulted in a considerable reduction in the number of cruising yachts visiting this area. Those that do normally pass through as quickly as possible and only make brief stops on their way from South East Asia to the Mediterranean, with even fewer attempting to sail the other way. Countries bordering on the Persian Gulf, which have started attracting some visiting yachts, such as Abu Dhabi and Dubai, have embarked on an ambitious programme of developing their yachting facilities. The future depends very much on the piracy situation and, if that situation is resolved, there is no doubt that there will be an immediate upsurge in the number of boats sailing in the North Indian Ocean, an area that has a large potential for both cruising and racing.

Piracy has been an ongoing phenomenon in the Gulf of Aden and around the Horn of Africa since time immemorial, but it has flared up considerably since the collapse of

Somalia's central government. Anyone planning to sail through that area should monitor the situation carefully and visit the website of international organizations involved in piracy control such as the International Maritime Organization. The British Royal Navy operates out of Dubai and can be contacted by email ([ukmtodubai@eim.ae](mailto:ukmtodubai@eim.ae)) for an update on the situation.

In recent years, the main movement has been from east to west, mainly by yachts heading from South East Asia to the Mediterranean. Therefore most sailors plan to do this during the northeast monsoon when sailing conditions in the North Indian Ocean are the most favourable. Those leaving from Thailand or Malaysia normally plan their departure for the beginning of the year so as to have enough time to visit some of the many interesting places on the way and still arrive in the Mediterranean at the start of the sailing season in late April or May. Lying astride the main route, Sri Lanka, and its conveniently located port of Galle, continues to be a favourite port of call. From there, most boats sail either to the Maldives or Cochin in India before continuing west. In recent years many yachts have stopped in Oman, especially those that





intended to join a convoy to pass through the critical area in the Gulf of Aden. But even without this consideration, Oman makes an interesting and convenient stop on this long transocean passage. Before entering the Red Sea, there is the choice between making a last stop at Aden or at Djibouti, with the latter normally being the preferred option.

Once through the Strait of Bab el Mandeb, yachts heading north through the Red Sea usually take their time to cruise the coasts of Eritrea, Sudan and Egypt, as most only aim to reach the Mediterranean by late spring. Along the eastern shores, Yemen is slowly adopting a more tolerant attitude towards yachts, but Saudi Arabia still does not allow cruising in their waters. The above route has the advantage that it takes in virtually all interesting places in the North Indian Ocean and also benefits from the best sailing conditions.

The opposite route, sailed by those who wish to reach South East Asia from the Mediterranean is similarly dictated by seasons, and therefore should be planned to take place during the southwest monsoon. A spring departure from the Mediterranean would benefit from more favourable weather in the Red Sea, as would an April crossing of the North Indian Ocean. The timing of such eastbound passages must be carefully planned to take into account the risk of cyclones in the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal.

While the number of cruising yachts has seen a drop in the North Indian Ocean generally, the opposite is happening in the northern part of the Red Sea which is now visited by an increasing number of yachts that come south through the Suez Canal to spend the winter in the Red Sea, whether in Southern Egypt or the Gulf of Aqaba, and to return to the Mediterranean in the spring.

Yachting facilities throughout the region are still relatively limited, and having any repair done in most places is difficult. The exception is some of the Gulf States, a few ports in India that have a local sailing community, and the new marinas in Southern Egypt. In all other places, local workshops may be able to undertake some repair even if they are not used to dealing with yachts. Marine equipment and spares are generally difficult or impossible to obtain, so anyone planning to cruise in this region should be as self-sufficient as possible.

Sailing in the North Indian Ocean has always been dictated by the monsoons and, as Arab traders in their dhows discovered hundreds of years ago, only fools try to sail against them. The northeast monsoon lasts from November to March, while the southwest monsoon is from June to September. Tropical cyclones can occur in the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal, particularly at the changeover of monsoons, May to June and October to November.

# BAHRAIN



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BAHRAIN IS AN ARCHIPELAGO in the southern Persian Gulf made up of 36 islands, most of which are small uninhabited coral reefs. Bahrain Island is the largest, and makes up 85 per cent of the country's land area. Potentially the most interesting cruising area is the Hawar archipelago, a small group of islands lying close to Qatar's west coast. The islands are a nature reserve to protect a number of endangered species, and special permission is needed to visit them. Sailing vessels have been in use here since earliest times, and while no longer used commercially, interest in sailing has survived. The Bahrain Yacht Club has an active membership of owners of both sail and power yachts.

## ◆ COUNTRY PROFILE

Bahrain's strategic position has made it an important trading centre since ancient times. In 1783, the Al-Khalifa family captured Bahrain from the Persians. In order to secure the territory, it entered into a series of treaties with Britain during the nineteenth century that made Bahrain a British Protectorate in 1861. The archipelago attained its independence in 1971. Facing declining oil reserves, Bahrain turned to petroleum refining and has transformed itself into an international banking centre. The Al-Khalifa dynasty has ruled the country since 1783. The current King Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa acceded to the throne in 1999.

The population is approximately 730,000, of which over 63 per cent are Bahraini Arabs, the rest being made up of recent immigrants from East Asia, Iran and other Arab countries. Arabic is the official language, but English, Farsi and Urdu are also spoken widely. The capital is Manama.

## ◆ CLIMATE

The climate ranges between two extremes – cool winters with sparse rainfall and hot summers with high humidity. Daytime summer temperatures range between 38°C/100°F and 42°C/108°F. The dry northwest wind, known locally as *Al Barah*, keeps humidity down and creates more pleasant conditions.

## ◆ FORMALITIES

### PORT OF ENTRY

Mina Sulman 26°14' N 50°35' E

This is the main port and is reached through a one mile long dredged channel between Sitra and Muharraq islands.



Port control should be contacted when 3 miles offshore. Pilotage is compulsory, but may be waived for small craft in daytime.

On arrival, nationals of most countries will be granted a visa for a stay of 14 days. Alternatively, an e-visa can be obtained.

## ◆ FACILITIES

There are three marinas: Bahrain Yacht Club, Marina Club for larger yachts, and Al Bandar Resort. Facilities are good and there is a 50 ton travelift at Marina Club.

### Websites

[www.bahrainguide.org](http://www.bahrainguide.org)  
[www.evisa.gov.bh/VisaBhrEn.html](http://www.evisa.gov.bh/VisaBhrEn.html) (Bahrain electronic visa service)  
[www.thebahrainyachtclub.com](http://www.thebahrainyachtclub.com)

<b>Local time</b>	UTC +3
<b>Buoyage</b>	IALA A
<b>Currency</b>	Bahraini Dinar (BHD)
<b>Electricity</b>	230V, 50Hz

### Diplomatic missions

UK	1757 4100
USA	1724 2700

### Communications

IDD 973	IAC 00
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**Emergency number** 999

# DJIBOUTI

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THE REPUBLIC OF DJIBOUTI is a small country in the Horn of Africa, little more than the port of Djibouti and the surrounding semi-desert hinterland. Djibouti's strategic position between the Red Sea and Indian Ocean has always played an important role in the country's destiny and Djibouti is an important base in the international campaign against piracy. The country is also a convenient port of call for both eastbound and northbound yachts. The majority are heading for the Mediterranean and arrive in Djibouti during the northeast monsoon, mainly between February and April.

## ◆ COUNTRY PROFILE

The history of Djibouti is recorded in the poetry and songs of its nomadic people and goes back thousands of years to the time when this was an important trading post between the Mediterranean, Africa and Asia. The French presence expanded in the nineteenth century and the colony of French Somaliland was created in 1862, later to be renamed the French Territory of the Afars and Issas. Continuing internal unrest led France to give independence to the last French colony on the African mainland in 1977. Djibouti maintains a strong relationship with France and also hosts the only US military base in Eastern Africa.

The population of 516,000 are mainly Afars and Issas, both being Muslim peoples. Arabic and French are the official languages, but Afar and Somali are also spoken.

## ◆ CLIMATE

The climate is tropical, but due to Djibouti's location it can reach extremes in summer when it can be very hot, especially from June to August, when temperatures can reach 45°C/112°F. Occasionally the *khamsin* wind blows from the desert, bringing dust and reducing visibility. The weather from October to April is cooler and the winds are mostly easterly.

## ◆ FORMALITIES

### PORT OF ENTRY

Djibouti 11°36' N 43°09' E

The port captain should be called on Channel 12. Arriving yachts may use one of the floating pontoons in front of the former yacht club building, south of the main wharf, or anchor nearby. Formalities are usually completed in the commercial harbour.

Short-term visas are issued to nationals of most countries



on arrival and the ship's papers are retained until departure. For stays of longer than ten days, a visa should be obtained in advance. For northbound boats, Djibouti is a convenient place to obtain an Egyptian visa at the Egyptian consulate. Eastbound boats can get information here on the latest security situation in the waters surrounding neighbouring Somalia.

## ◆ FACILITIES

Repair facilities for yachts are limited, although there are a few workshops capable of carrying out some jobs. Provisioning is good due to the military presence. There is a lively market in the town centre. Fuel is available in the commercial harbour.

### Cruising Guide

Red Sea Pilot

<b>Local time</b>	UTC +3
<b>Buoyage</b>	IALA A
<b>Currency</b>	Djiboutian Franc (DJF)
<b>Electricity</b>	220V, 50Hz

### Diplomatic missions

UK	3 85007	USA	3 353995
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### Communications

IDD 253	IAC 00
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### Emergency numbers

112	Ambulance 351	Police 17
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# EGYPT



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WHILE CRUISING OPPORTUNITIES along Egypt's Mediterranean shores are limited to port-hopping along the featureless coast, the Egyptian section of the Red Sea offers a wide variety of choices. Whether arriving by way of the Suez Canal or after a battle against contrary winds up the Red Sea, any sailor with time on his or her hands will greatly appreciate the only area of the country that is worth cruising – the bays and reefs that stretch all the way from the Sudanese border to the Gulf of Suez and into the Gulf of Aqaba. Daysailing along this coast is the more pleasant way to make progress against the prevailing northerlies.

Those interested in Ancient Egypt will find along the banks of the Upper Nile some of mankind's most outstanding treasures: the temple complex of Karnak at Luxor, the royal tombs in the Valleys of Kings and Queens at Thebes, and the Abu Simbel rock temples at Aswan. These sites are easily accessible from one of the marinas in the Hurghada area.

The Gulf of Aqaba and the east coast of the Sinai Peninsula have many cruising opportunities and winter weather here is much more pleasant than in the Mediterranean, making this a tempting between seasons alternative. As the northern Red Sea is slowly becoming a sailing destination in its own right, this part of Egypt has seen a rapid improvement in yachting facilities, with several marinas being opened as part of expanding tourist resorts.

## ◆ CLIMATE

The summers are very hot, with extremely high temperatures. Winters are mild with little rain. The hottest months are July and August, with average temperatures of 27°C/81°F and day temperatures that often reach 42°C/108°F in July and August. January is the coolest month with an average temperature of 17°C/63°F in the northern part of the Red Sea. The prevailing winds are northerly. Occasionally the *khamsin*, a hot dry wind, blows off the land; it is laden with dust and sand, reducing visibility. The prevailing winds in the Red Sea are northerly.

## ◆ FORMALITIES

### PORTS OF ENTRY

Suez 29°58' N 32°33' E	Hurghada 27°13.30' N 33°50' E
Port Ghalib 25°32' N 34°38' E	Abu Tig 27°24.60' N 33°41' E
Safaga 26°44' N 33°56' E	Sharm el Sheik 27°51' N 34°17' E
Taba Heights 29°22.30' N 34°47.40' E	

**Port Ghalib:** Arriving yachts should contact the marina on Channels 16 or 10, then proceed to the end of the entrance channel and tie up at the reception dock. The marina will assist with formalities.

**Hurghada:** Yachts may proceed directly to the new marina to complete formalities there, but the marina should be contacted in advance on Channel 71 to make the necessary arrangements.

**El Gouna (Abu Tig Marina):** The marina should be contacted on Channels 16 or 73.

**Taba Heights:** The marina deals with all formalities and monitors Channels 16 and 73.

**Safaga:** Port Control should be called when approaching the port. The port captain insists that yachts come alongside the main dock, although this is sometimes unsuitable. The recommended anchorage (26°47.59' N 33°56.33' E) is in front of Paradise Hotel.

**Suez:** Yachts are usually met in the approaches by an agent's boat, who will offer his services, sometimes quite forcefully. It is therefore advisable to have made arrangements with an agent in advance, who will then meet the yacht on arrival in a launch. The agent will obtain permission from the Suez Port Authority for the yacht to proceed directly to the Suez Yacht Club. Otherwise yachts should anchor in the waiting area in Port Ibrahim and contact Port Control for permission to go to Suez Yacht Club, which is located on the west side of the canal, just beyond the Suez Canal Authority buildings.

At all points of entry visas valid for one month are granted on arrival. These can be extended by the local immigration

The Suez Yacht Club overlooks the Suez Canal.



office or the police. Visas are not needed by anyone on a yacht transiting the Suez Canal and remaining in the port area.

Foreign-flagged boats may stay up to one year from the date of arrival. After one year, vessels need to be bonded for four months or leave the country for the same period. It is imperative to obtain on arrival the maximum period permitted as extending the initially given time is very difficult or even impossible.

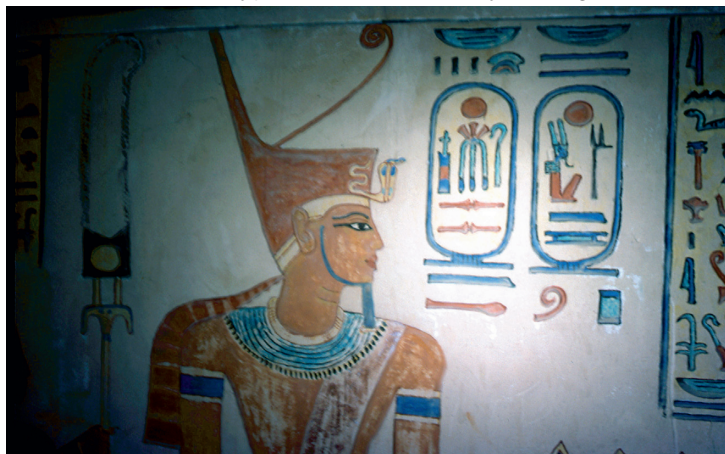
Coast Guard cruising permits are no longer issued; the only permits issued are those at the private marinas at Port Ghalib and Taba. These are monthly cruising permits, which are valid for all marinas. Yachts coming from Sudan and sheltering from strong winds, or making overnight stops without going ashore, are normally allowed to stay in Egyptian waters before clearing in at an official port of entry. Those intending to make such stops should attempt to secure a visa in advance.

### ◆ FACILITIES

The opening of several new marinas has greatly improved both docking and repair facilities, although major repairs may still be beyond local capabilities. Provisions and fuel are available at all marinas. The latest marina is Taba Heights, set within a tourist resort on the shore of the Gulf of Aqaba. The new marinas are a welcome sight, especially for sailors who arrive from a passage up the Red Sea. Port Ghalib Marina is part of a huge resort complex and town development, and is a most convenient place to clear into Egypt if arriving from the south. Abu Tig Marina in El Gouna is the most popular, with the best facilities. All new marinas have good facilities, with fuel, water, wifi and a range of repair services.

For those transiting the Suez Canal, Ismailia is a convenient place to leave the boat while visiting Cairo or other places in the interior. The yacht club is well run, the staff are helpful and friendly, and the town itself is well worth a visit.

Fresco of boy prince from a tomb in the Valley of the Kings.



### ◆ SUEZ CANAL

Transit formalities are complicated and more time-consuming than in Port Said, so using the services of a local agent is highly recommended. Those who wish to do it themselves need to visit the Small Craft Department in the main building of the Canal Authority where they will be instructed as to the various formalities to be carried out and payments to be made. These payments include the transiting fee, insurance policy, ports and lights fee. The captain must then arrange for a technical inspection of the yacht. Following this, a transit permit will be issued and a time arranged for the pilot to come on board. On the day of the transit the pilot will arrive early in the morning to guide the yacht as far as Ismailia in the northwest corner of Lake Timsah, where the vessel must spend the night as yachts are not allowed to transit at night. Those who are only transiting the Suez Canal and have not completed entry formalities are not allowed to go ashore.

Early the following morning, either the same pilot or another one will continue the transit to Port Said. Yachts are normally met by a launch that collects the pilot and directs the yacht to the Port Fouad Yacht Club on the eastern side of the harbour. If transiting the Canal, and not stopping anywhere after the transit, the outward clearance can be obtained while doing the transit formalities. Yachts may then proceed as soon as they have completed the transit and dropped the pilot. Once outward clearance has been obtained, yachts must leave within 24 hours, or obtain another clearance.

### ◆ RESTRICTIONS

All military zones are prohibited areas.

Egypt is very environmentally conscious and many sensitive areas in the Red Sea are protected. Spearfishing, the taking of reef fish, collecting of coral, shells and marine animals, are all forbidden. There are now national park boundaries on most islands and reefs, and anchoring in coral is prohibited. Mooring buoys are provided on most dive sites.

### ◆ CHARTER

Foreign-flagged vessels are not allowed to charter in Egyptian waters, so currently there are neither foreign nor local charter operators.

#### Cruising Guide

Red Sea Pilot

#### Websites

[www.suezcanal.gov.eg](http://www.suezcanal.gov.eg)

[www.egypt.travel](http://www.egypt.travel)

For general information, see the Egypt (Mediterranean) section on page 28.

# ERITREA



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ERITREA HAS A LONG COASTLINE of over 600 miles along the west of the Red Sea. The coastal plain is narrow and arid, rising to highlands in the north and centre. The opening of Eritrea to foreign yachts has radically altered the sailing picture in the Red Sea as it is now possible to cruise along the entire Eritrean coast in easy stages by exploring countless anchorages and offshore islands. With its two ports of entry, Massawa and Assab, strategically located near the extremities of the country, boats sailing in either direction can clear into Eritrea at one of the ports, daysail along the coast, and then clear out at the other end. In the Bay of Massawa lies the Dahlek archipelago, with hundreds of islets, reefs and cays, a protected marine park which provides many cruising opportunities. The relatively protected inner channel between the islands and the mainland makes it possible to sail to or from Sudan in sheltered waters.

## ◆ COUNTRY PROFILE

Nomads and traders migrated to this area from the north thousands of years ago. The Land of Punt, visited by Egyptian ships in Pharaonic times, was believed to be located here, although present-day Somalia is the more likely location. Eritrea existed as an independent state until its annexation by the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century. In 1952 the United Nations sanctioned the setting up of a federation with Ethiopia, but after the Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie was overthrown in 1974, the federation disintegrated. In 1993 Eritrea declared independence, but a state of instability persists as Ethiopia continues to claim some territory.

Eritrea's population numbers 5.7 million. Tigrinya and Arabic are the official languages. Asmara is the capital.



## ◆ CLIMATE

The dry subtropical climate ensures temperatures remain high on the coast; in July and August they often reach 40°C/104°F. The northern coast has a rainy season from December to February, but little rain falls in the south.

## ◆ FACILITIES

Docking at the commercial dock in Massawa is reported to be bad as the quay is rough and exposed to the swell. Anchoring in Taulud Bay is not recommended because of theft by both local and foreign fishermen. Provisioning and repair facilities are limited; fuel is not always available in Massawa, but is obtainable in Assab. In both places there is some fresh produce. There are no ATMs or credit card facilities.

<b>Local time</b>	UTC +3
<b>Buoyage</b>	IALA A
<b>Currency</b>	Eritrean Nakfa (ERN)
<b>Electricity</b>	230V, 50Hz

### Diplomatic missions

UK	1 202 838	USA	1 120 004
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### Communications

IDD 291 IAC 00

## ◆ FORMALITIES

### PORTS OF ENTRY

Massawa 15°37' N 39°29' E      Assab 13°00' N 42°44' E

**Massawa:** After contacting the port captain by radio, yachts should either come alongside the rough wharf or anchor off. After clearance, vessels may be allowed to proceed into the inner harbour if there is space, or anchor in the outer harbour.

**Assab:** Because of the constant surge, coming alongside the dock can be dangerous, so it is advisable to anchor in the lee of the sea wall. Formalities are completed ashore. There is little protection from strong southerlies, and under such conditions it is better to continue to Massawa.

A 48-hour shore pass is issued on arrival, after which a visa must be purchased. An additional fee needs to be paid if one intends to go inland. Entry formalities have to be completed at each port. After clearing out, the yacht must leave within one hour.

When in Eritrean waters yachts should expect to be approached by the military, often not wearing uniforms especially close to islands that have military posts – such as Difnein.

# INDIA

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KNOWN AS BHARAT IN HINDI, India is a country of infinite variety. For many years it had been avoided by most yachts cruising the North Indian Ocean mainly because of the complexity of entry formalities. In places frequented by foreign yachts, this is no longer the case as formalities have been simplified and officials are getting used to dealing with visiting sailors. The most satisfactory situation is in some of the larger ports where customs and port organizations have their own sailing clubs and welcome visiting yachts.

The best time to visit is during the pleasant northeast monsoon, between November and March. Most yachts call at Cochin (Kochi), conveniently placed close to the Red Sea route. Farther up the west coast, the old Portuguese trading port of Goa (Mormugao) provides a fascinating and colourful interlude. An even more interesting stop is Mumbai, especially as some of the local customs officials are keen sailors. The Royal Bombay Yacht Club, founded in 1846 and one of India's most prestigious clubs, welcomes visiting sailors. Mumbai is a good place from which to travel inland to experience India's rich culture. Few yachts visit the east coast, although Chennai, formerly Madras, is a port of entry with one of the oldest yacht clubs in India.

Yachts can now visit the Andaman Islands, but must be in possession of an official permit as well as a valid Indian visa.



An easy way to visit these interesting islands is to join the annual rally from Phuket, whose organizers deal with all formalities. The Nicobar Islands, which lie astride the rhumb line from Phuket to Sri Lanka, are occasionally visited by yachts on passage, but you need to have an Indian visa, unless you can claim that the stop was necessitated by an emergency.

India's coastal waters are teeming with small craft and, especially when sailing at night, you need to be extremely careful as most of them do not carry lights and collisions are a frequent occurrence.

## ◆ COUNTRY PROFILE

India has been inhabited since prehistoric times, and Neolithic man originated from the Indus basin. Around 2000 BCE Aryan tribes from Central Asia colonized North India, bringing with them the Sanskrit language and the caste system. Many empires rose and fell until contact with Europe developed, and by the early nineteenth century Britain controlled most of India. Full independence came in 1947 when the subcontinent was divided into the secular state of India and the Muslim state of Pakistan.

With a population of 1.17 billion, this second largest nation in the world is made up of many ethnic minorities, with Hindu the largest at 41 per cent. Hindi is the official and most widespread language and there are 250 regional dialects. English is also an official language and is spoken by many. New Delhi is the capital.

## ◆ CLIMATE

The coastal regions can be very hot and humid and the best time to visit is during the northeast monsoon from November to April, when it is dry and sunny and the southwest coast has the benefit of more protected harbours. In the southwest monsoon period, the west coast is mostly unprotected, there being rain and heavy swell from June to October.

## ◆ FORMALITIES

### PORTS OF ENTRY

Port Blair (Andaman Islands)	11°40' N 92°45' E
Mumbai (Bombay)	18°54' N 72°49' E
Mormugao (Goa)	15°25' N 73°48' E
Kochi (Cochin)	9°58' N 76°14' E
Chennai (Madras)	13°05' N 80°17' E





When approximately 12 miles from a port, the Coast Guard should be called, giving the yacht's details. Port control should be called on arrival to ask for permission to enter the harbour.

**Andaman Islands:** Yachts should proceed directly to Port Blair without stopping at any other island and come alongside the main quay. All formalities are completed ashore and they are lengthy. A detailed itinerary must be submitted and a twice-daily radio report observed while in Andaman waters.

**Kochi (Cochin):** Clearance normally occurs at Willingdon Island off the Malabar Hotel. Authorities will come in a launch and formalities are completed ashore.

**Mormugao (Goa):** The main port is busy with commercial ships, but yachts that have attempted to clear in at the smaller port of Panaji (formerly Panjim) have encountered difficulties.

**Mumbai (Bombay):** Yachts arriving from outside the country must advise the authorities at least 72 hours in advance. This can be done via the Royal Bombay Yacht Club.

Nationals of all countries must obtain a tourist visa in advance. On arrival, sailors are given a shore pass, so permission must be granted to travel inland. Prior permission is needed to visit the Andaman Islands. An easy way to obtain the Indian visa and have the itinerary approved to visit these islands is via Emotion Travel in Phuket (Tel. +76 222 320).

Formalities are still complicated and lengthy. Customs

require a specific list of all portable items, laptops, cameras, binoculars and any foreign currency. Items not mentioned can be confiscated.

Normally a yacht can remain in India for six months.

### ◆ FACILITIES

The yachting infrastructure is growing rapidly, with several new marinas. Being the most visited port by foreign yachts and a port of call for the Volvo Ocean Race in 2008, Kochi has improved its facilities and a new marina was commissioned. It is possible to haul out at the Malabar Yacht Club, which has a limited range of facilities and there is a small boatyard close by. In Mumbai, the Royal Bombay Yacht Club gives honorary membership to visiting sailors and allows them to use its facilities, as well as assisting with repair advice. Spare parts are generally unobtainable, but there are workshops capable of simple repairs.

### ◆ CHARTER

The Malabar Yacht Club in Kochi has a crewed sailing vessel for charter, while Sea Time Yacht Charters (Rent A Boat) has a small fleet of powerboats in Mumbai.

[www.malabar-yacht-club.org](http://www.malabar-yacht-club.org)

[www.rentaboat.in](http://www.rentaboat.in)

### Cruising Guides

Indian Ocean Cruising Guide

Andaman Sea Pilot

### Websites

[www.incredibleindia.org](http://www.incredibleindia.org)

[www.royalbombayyachtclub.com](http://www.royalbombayyachtclub.com)

<b>Local time</b>	UTC +5,5
<b>Buoyage</b>	IALA A
<b>Currency</b>	Indian Rupee (INR)
<b>Electricity</b>	240V, 50Hz

### Diplomatic missions

UK	11 2687 2161
USA	11 2419 8000
Australia	11 4139 9900
Canada	11 4178 2000
South Africa	11 2614 9411
New Zealand	11 2688 3170

### Communications

IDD 91 IAC 00

### Emergency numbers

100 Ambulance 102

# JORDAN

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THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN has a mere 13 miles of coastline on the Gulf of Aqaba, at the head of which is Aqaba, Jordan's only seaport. Most of Jordan is desert, with a dry raised plateau stretching down the centre of the country. The valley of the River Jordan includes the Dead Sea depression which, at 400m (1,300ft) below sea level, is the lowest point on the surface of the earth.

More cruising yachts are now visiting this interesting country and although the coastline itself has little to offer, this is more than made up for by the attractions of the interior, such as the Rose Red city at Petra, the stunning rock formations at Wadi Rum, or the Dead Sea. The one notable exception is the Aqaba Marine Park, where several mooring buoys have been laid down for boats visiting the park. Tala Bay is located nearby and a new marina is now operational there.



## ◆ COUNTRY PROFILE

The region that is present-day Jordan has been settled from the earliest days of history, ruled over by many empires until the Ottomans' defeat by British and Arab forces during the First World War. In 1946 Jordan achieved full independence under the rule of Abdullah ibn Hussein, of the Hashemite dynasty. His grandson, King Abdullah II, acceded to the throne in 1999.

The population numbers 6.4 million and includes a considerable number of Palestinian refugees. Arabic is the official language, but English and French are also used. Amman is the capital.

## ◆ CLIMATE

The climate can be described as Mediterranean, with hot dry summers and cool rainy winters. For a month or so before and after the summer, hot, dry air from the desert, drawn by low pressure, produces the strong wind called *khamsin* from the south or southeast. Another local wind, the *shammal*, comes from the north or northwest, usually between June and September.

## ◆ FORMALITIES

### PORTS OF ENTRY

Aqaba 29°31' N 34°59' E, Tala Bay Marina 29°24.54' N 34°58.14' E

The port authorities should be contacted on Channels 16 or 12 on arrival in Jordanian waters. They normally visit the yacht by patrol boat and advise where to complete formalities.

**Aqaba:** Yachts are either directed into the commercial harbour or to the Royal Yacht Club of Jordan.

**Tala Bay Marina:** On arrival, the marina should be contacted on Channel 77. Entry formalities can be completed at this new marina. A crew list, copies of passports and details of the yacht should be sent three days in advance by email to the marina.

Shore passes are issued on arrival. For travel inland, a visa is required. Most nationals can obtain visas on arrival, valid from one to three months depending on nationality.

Spearfishing and the removal of shells or coral are prohibited. If cruising the Gulf of Aqaba it has been advised that it is better to visit Jordan before Israel, and not the other way around. Some yachts coming from Eilat have been refused entry.

## ◆ FACILITIES

There are two well-equipped marinas, the new Tala Bay Marina and the Royal Yacht Club of Jordan. Either is a safe place to leave the boat while visiting the interior. Fuel, travelift and simple repairs are available. Provisioning is good.

### Cruising Guide

Red Sea Pilot

### Websites

www.mota.gov.jo (Ministry of Tourism)  
www.talabay.jo/Marina.shtm

### Local time

UTC +2  
Summer time: last Friday in March to last Friday in October

### Buoyage

IALA A

### Currency

Jordanian Dinar (JOD)

### Electricity

230V, 50Hz

### Diplomatic missions

UK	6 590 9200	Canada	6 520 3300
USA	6 590 6000	South Africa	6 592 1194
Australia	6 580 7000		

### Communications

IDD 962 IAC 00

### Emergency numbers

Ambulance 191 Police 192

# KUWAIT



393

KUWAIT lies on the northwest coast of the Persian Gulf and has boundaries with Iraq and Saudi Arabia. The land is mainly desert with a more fertile narrow coastal belt. About 15 to 20 per cent of the world's known oil reserves lie under Kuwaiti soil.

There are a number of locally owned yachts, mainly power, and two marinas, one near the capital, the other in the south of the country. The northern area of the Bay of Kuwait is shallow and characterized by mud flats, whereas the southern coast along the Arabian Gulf is deeper and has sandy beaches. Most ports are on the southern shores and there are several good anchorages. Although tourism is discouraged by the authorities, the few cruising boats that have visited Kuwait have been allowed to stay for a limited period.

## ◆ COUNTRY PROFILE

The island of Failaka, at the mouth of Kuwait Bay, was a trading centre from ancient times, but the mainland was only settled in the eighteenth century. Ancestors of Kuwait's present rulers, the Al-Sabah family, established their rule over the emirate, which became a British protectorate in 1899. In the 1930s the exploitation of oil was begun, and British protection formally ended in 1961. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990 led to the First Gulf War that ended with the liberation of Kuwait and the defeat of Iraq.

The population is 2.7 million. The official language is Arabic, but English is widely spoken. The capital is Kuwait City.

## ◆ CLIMATE

The climate is subtropical with cool winters and hot dry summers when temperatures range from 29°C/84°F in the morning to more than 49°C/120°F in the shade at noon. The prevailing northwest wind called *shamal* is a cooling breeze in summer. Most rainfall occurs between October and April in the form of showers or sudden violent cloudbursts.

## ◆ FORMALITIES

### PORTS OF ENTRY

Shuwaikh (Kuwait City) 29°21' N 47°56' E

Shuaiba 29°02' N 48°10' E Umm Al Maradim 28°40' N 48°39' E

Port Control should be called for instructions.

**Shuwaikh:** This is the main port, and after clearance yachts are directed to the Kuwait Yacht Club Marina.

**Umm Al Maradim:** Entry formalities can be completed in the port on this island, which is uninhabited except for the officials.

Nationals of most EU countries, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the USA may obtain a visa on arrival, usually



for one month. Other nationalities must obtain one in advance. Alcohol is prohibited. Other banned imports are pork products, shellfish, unsealed milk products, fresh vegetables, and items of Israeli origin. Books and DVDs may be subject to censorship.

Islamic law should be respected, both men and women should dress conservatively and, during the month of Ramadan, not eat, drink or smoke in public.

## ◆ FACILITIES

There are two marinas, one near Kuwait City, referred to as the Yacht Club, while Khiran Marina is near the Saudi border. Amenities at the Yacht Club Marina are good, with a range of repair and haulout facilities up to 40 tons. There is a fuel dock and good provisioning.

Khiran Marina is part of a large resort and has the usual facilities. Yachts should ask for assistance before entering as the entrance is reported to be difficult and should only be attempted with local help.

### Website

[www.kuwaitiah.net](http://www.kuwaitiah.net) (tourism information)

<b>Local time</b>	UTC +3
<b>Buoyage</b>	IALA A
<b>Currency</b>	Kuwaiti Dinar (KWD)
<b>Electricity</b>	240V, 50Hz

### Diplomatic missions

UK	2259 4320	Canada	2256 3025
USA	2259 1001	South Africa	561 7988
Australia	232 2422		

### Communications

IDD 965 IAC 00

### Emergency number

777

# MALDIVES

394



THE MALDIVES are low-lying coral islands grouped into 26 atolls protected by surrounding reefs. All the atolls are north of the equator, with the exception of Addu Atoll. The word 'atoll' is derived from *atholhu* in the Dhivehi language of the Maldives. Rarely exceeding a few feet above sea level, the Maldives are among the first countries threatened to be submerged by the rising ocean levels as a result of climate change.

From the cruising sailor's point of view, the Maldives have many attractions, but one major disadvantage is the lack of all-weather anchorages. Although there are plenty of islands to visit, in most lagoons the anchorages are very deep and exposed. This is the reason for the popularity of islands such as Thulusdhoo and Himmafushi, which have shallow well-protected anchorages. Apart from this shortcoming, the Maldives are an interesting cruising ground and the diving in some atolls is excellent.

## ◆ COUNTRY PROFILE

The origin of the Maldivian islanders is not known, although it is thought that they probably came from India and Sri Lanka. Until 1153 the Maldivians were ruled by Buddhist kings, then an Islamic sultanate was established. The islands resisted all attempts to colonize them, although by agreement

they were a British protectorate from 1887 until 1965. In 1968 the country became a republic.

Malé, the capital, is the only urban settlement. Of the 396,000 inhabitants of the Maldives, over a quarter live in Malé. The population is a mixture of Sri Lankan, Indian, Indonesian, Malay, Arab, African and European. Dhivehi is the main language, although English is also spoken. It is a Muslim country, which means certain customs must be respected. Alcohol is only available on the tourist islands.

## ◆ CLIMATE

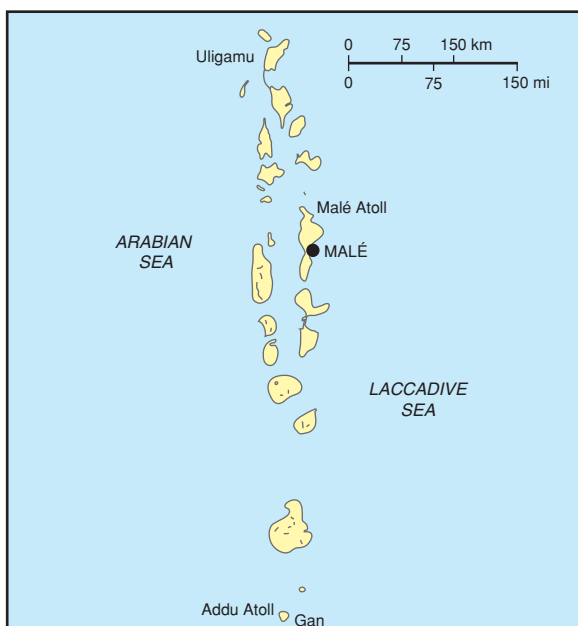
Lying close to the equator, the winds are mild and calms are common. The southwest monsoon blows from May to October, bringing more rain and stronger winds, especially in June and July. The northeast monsoon lasts from November to April. This is the more pleasant season, when average temperatures range between 25°C and 31°C (77°F and 88°F).

## ◆ FORMALITIES

### PORTS OF ENTRY

Malé (North Malé Atoll)	4°10' N 73°30' E
Uligamu (Haa Alifu Atoll)	7°5' N 72°56' E
Gan (Addu Atoll)	0°42' S 73°09' E





**Malé:** On arrival, you should contact the Coast Guard to be advised as to where to proceed. Yachts that have secured the services of an agent are normally asked to go direct to Hulhumale anchorage to await inspection. Although you may be able to clear in unaided, the authorities usually insist on the use of an agent. The anchorage near the port in Malé Atoll is difficult because of the great depth. A shallower area is reported at 4° 10.40' N 73° 29.80' E. Access into Malé Atoll between 2300 and 0600 is prohibited.

**Uligamu:** Boats en route to the Red Sea often stop at this northernmost island of the Maldives. This is now an official port of entry and there are officials located there who will deal with formalities. There are strict restrictions when going ashore: visitors may not stay ashore after 2200 hours, nor any alcohol be taken there; women must be properly dressed; and no islanders may come on board.

**Gan:** Visiting yachts normally anchor in the small boat harbour. Officials are reported to prefer an agent to be used to complete formalities. A local agent answers on Channel 16.

The requirement for yachts to only clear in and out at Malé has been lifted and in recent years boats have been able to stop at Uligamu in Haa Alifu Atoll and Gan in Addu Atoll. As the Maldives authorities have made it very clear that they do not particularly welcome cruising yachts as their contribution to the tourism industry is negligible, stops in these two places are only tolerated if they are short and no other islands are visited. Those who intend to call at other islands are asked to proceed to Malé and complete formalities there.

All visitors are given a 30-day permit on arrival. A cruising permit must be obtained to sail to any other atolls besides Malé Atoll. This has to be arranged via an agent and costs US\$500.

#### ◆ FACILITIES

The few available facilities are almost all at Malé, which has some small workshops capable of simple repairs. Hulhumale anchorage, which is close to the airport, is sheltered and the capital can be reached by ferry. As most food has to be imported, provisions are expensive. Fuel is only available in Malé, being scarce in the outer islands. A few basic provisions are available at Uligamu and Gan, and when fuel is obtainable you should be prepared to pay a high price for it. Some repair facilities as well as diesel are available at Gan. A marina now operates at Dhonakulhi Island in Haa Alifu Atoll, but it is part of an exclusive resort and arrangements must be made in advance if intending to call there. Some of the tourist resorts welcome visiting yachts, but others prohibit anchoring in their atolls.

#### ◆ CHARTER

There are no bareboat operators, only a small number of companies offering crewed charters: Dream Yacht Charter, based at Thilafushi in North Malé, and Indian Ocean Charters. Both have a small fleet of catamarans, while South Asian Charters operates monohulls.

[www.dreamyachtcharter.com](http://www.dreamyachtcharter.com)  
[www.indianoceancharters.com](http://www.indianoceancharters.com)  
[www.sacharter.com](http://www.sacharter.com)

#### Cruising Guides

Atlas of the Maldives  
 Indian Ocean Cruising Guide  
 Maldives Cruising Guide

#### Website

[www.visitmaldives.com](http://www.visitmaldives.com)

<b>Local time</b>	UTC +5
<b>Buoyage</b>	IALA A
<b>Currency</b>	Maldivian Rufiyaa (MVR)
<b>Electricity</b>	230V, 50Hz

#### Diplomatic missions

New Zealand 322 432

#### Communications

IDD 960 IAC 00

#### Emergency numbers

Ambulance 102 Police 119

# OMAN



396

OMAN IS A SULTANATE on the eastern side of the Arabian Peninsula. For many years tourism was not encouraged, and virtually all the foreigners allowed into the country were on business. Sailors seem to have fared better as yachts were allowed to stop for a few days at Mina Raysut, near the town of Salalah, close to the Yemeni border. Although stopping along the coast is forbidden, boats are also allowed to call at Mina Qaboos (Muscat), where there is now a small marina. Practically all boats that call in at Oman are bound for the Red Sea, and although a detour is necessary if coming from Sri Lanka, the route from India, particularly Mumbai, passes very close to Raysut.

## ◆ COUNTRY PROFILE

During the first millennium, the northern coastal districts were dominated by the Persians. By the seventh century, Sohar, the ancient Omani capital, was one of the most important ports in the Indian Ocean. In spite of the arrival of Portuguese traders in the North Indian Ocean, Oman's maritime power continued to dominate the Gulf and surrounding waters until it was eroded by the growth of British influence in the Indian Ocean. The present dynasty began with Ahmad ibn Said in 1749. The current Sultan Qaboos bin Said has made great efforts to modernise Oman. The discovery of oil in the 1960s has radically altered the fortunes of this once poor country.

The population of over 3.4 million consists of two main tribes, the Yemeni and the Nizanis. A considerable number of Omanis still lead a nomadic life. Arabic is the official language, while English is spoken in business. The capital is Muscat.



## ◆ CLIMATE

April to October is very hot, with high humidity along the coasts. In summer, the temperatures can reach up to 50°C (122°F) in the shade. During November to March, the period of the northeast monsoon, the climate is more pleasant, with occasional rain.

## ◆ FORMALITIES

### PORTS OF ENTRY

Mina Raysut (Salalah)	16°56' N 54°00' E
Mina al Fahal	23°39' N 58°32' E
Marina Bander al-Rowdha (Muscat)	23°35' N 58°37' E

**Salalah:** Port Control should be called half an hour before arrival for instructions on where to go.

**Muscat:** Marina Bander al-Rowdha should be contacted and asked to call the relevant officials for clearance.

Quarantine, customs, immigration and port officials will all come to the boat. No one may go ashore until clearance has been completed. A 30-day visa will be issued to all nationals – except Israelis, and those with Israeli stamps in their passports. A cruising permit can be obtained from the Royal Oman Police.

Clearing out can take some time as all offices have to be visited: police first, and finishing with the port authority.

## ◆ FACILITIES

There is good provisioning and a fresh produce market in the town of Salalah. Some repair facilities are located in the port area, together with a crane for haulout. Oasis Club near the harbour gates at Salalah is reported to welcome visiting sailors. Marina Bander al-Rowdha has good repair facilities and a travelift.

### Cruising Guides

Indian Ocean Cruising Guide  
Red Sea Pilot

### Website

[www.destinationoman.com](http://www.destinationoman.com)

### Local time

UTC +4

### Buoyage

IALA A

### Currency

Omani Rial (OMR)

### Electricity

240V, 50Hz

### Diplomatic missions

UK	24 609 000	South Africa	694 791
USA	24 643 400		

### Communications

IDD 968 IAC 00

### Emergency number

999

# QATAR



397

QATAR OCCUPIES A FLAT PENINSULA jutting into the oil-rich area of the Persian Gulf. Due to its large reserves, Qatar is one of the richest per capita countries in the world. Its capital, Doha, has become the region's leading cultural and communications centre. This rapid development has turned Qatar into a fully modernized country, although an effort is being made to maintain a close link to its Islamic heritage in art and architecture. Cruising opportunities as such are limited to a few small offshore islands. Not to be outdone by its neighbours, who seem to be guided by the principle that if you don't have it you make it, Qatar decided to create some of its own islands from scratch. The result is Pearl-Qatar, a vast development created on a previous pearl-diving site and consisting of a large resort built on an artificial island that surrounds a circular harbour. In its centre is a smaller island and floating pontoons are spread around the perimeter, making this the largest marina in the Middle East, if not the world.

## ◆ COUNTRY PROFILE

From the early nineteenth century until the present day, the Thani dynasty has ruled Qatar, although from 1916 until 1971 the country was a British Protectorate. Qatar has transformed itself from a poor country noted mainly for pearling into a rich state with significant oil and natural gas revenues.

Its population numbers about 830,000, about half of which are foreign workers. The official language is Arabic, although English is widely used. The capital is Doha.

## ◆ CLIMATE

Qatar has a very dry climate with almost non-existent rainfall, averaging about 80mm (3in) a year, this falling only in winter. Summer days are extremely hot, with temperatures often reaching 40°C/104°F or above. Winters are cooler by day and can be quite chilly at night.

## ◆ FORMALITIES

### PORT OF ENTRY

Doha 25°17' N 51°32' E

Doha Port Authority may give permission to proceed directly to Doha Marina.

Nationals of the UK do not need a visa for a stay of up to 30 days. Nationals of Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the USA can apply for a visa on arrival. Other nationalities must apply for a visa in advance with the assistance of a sponsor, which can be a hotel or marina.

## ◆ FACILITIES

Facilities are good, with several marinas catering for a large yachting community of mostly powerboat owners.



### Website

[www.qatartourism.com](http://www.qatartourism.com)

<b>Local time</b>	UTC +3
<b>Buoyage</b>	IALA A
<b>Currency</b>	Qatari Riyal (QAR)
<b>Electricity</b>	240V, 50Hz

### Diplomatic missions

UK	496 2000
USA	488 4101
South Africa	485 7111

### Communications

IDD 974	IAC 00
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**Emergency number** 999

# SAUDI ARABIA



398

SAUDI ARABIA IS A VAST DESERT COUNTRY on the Arabian Peninsula. Mecca, the holiest place of Islam, is situated here. This is a very conservative Muslim country, difficult to visit by foreigners, except Muslims on pilgrimage to Mecca. In order to preserve religious purity, tourism is actively discouraged. This also includes cruising yachts. A few yachts that have been forced to call at a Saudi port have been treated courteously, once the authorities have ascertained that the stop has been caused by a genuine emergency. Boats that have either strayed into Saudi waters, or been apprehended cruising the off-lying Farasan Islands without permission, have been escorted into port and detained for a few days before being allowed to continue on their way. Anyone intending to sail to Saudi Arabia must approach the authorities in advance to obtain the necessary permissions, otherwise it is better to avoid its waters, unless forced to make an emergency stop.



## ◆ COUNTRY PROFILE

From Saudi Arabia's holy cities of Mecca and Medina, the Islamic faith was disseminated to the rest of the world. After centuries of having been under Ottoman rule, Saudi Arabia came into being as a result of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire after the First World War. King Ibn Saud, ruling from 1932 to 1953, modernized the country and succeeding members of his family have ruled since. King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud has been the ruler since 2005.

Of the 28 million inhabitants, more than half are foreign workers. Arabic is the official language, but English is widely spoken in business circles. Riyadh is the capital.

## ◆ CLIMATE

Saudi Arabia has a desert climate. In Jeddah, on the Red Sea, it is warm for most of the year and the summers are usually very hot. Winters are cooler and the weather is quite pleasant. The prevailing winds are light northwesterly.

## ◆ FORMALITIES

### PORTS OF ENTRY

Yanbu	24°06' N 38°03' E
Jeddah	21°28' N 39°10' E

Yachts are allowed to enter the above ports only in an emergency. Port Control should be contacted before arrival. Only the captain is allowed ashore to complete formalities. Both the yacht and crew are normally restricted to the port area, but if allowed ashore everyone must be back on board before sundown. Travel inland is not permitted and cruising

along the coast is strictly forbidden. In an emergency the captain should immediately contact a coastal radio station and insist on being treated according to international maritime law.

While there have been some recent signs of relaxation, tourism is not encouraged. Visas can only be obtained by sponsorship, commercial or individual, and are only rarely granted to sailors.

Fishing, swimming and the consumption of alcohol is strictly prohibited while in harbour.

## ◆ FACILITIES

Jeddah has fuel, repair yards, slipways as well as electrical and electronic workshops. Yanbu also has some workshops. Jeddah has excellent medical facilities, including a decompression chamber, which has been used by sailors who suffered diving accidents in the Red Sea and were rushed to Jeddah for emergency treatment.

### Cruising Guide

Red Sea Pilot

<b>Local time</b>	UTC +3
<b>Buoyage</b>	IALA A
<b>Currency</b>	Saudi Riyal (SAR)
<b>Electricity</b>	127V, 60Hz

### Diplomatic missions

UK	1 488 0077	Canada	1 488 2288
USA	1 488 3800	South Africa	1 442 9719
Australia	1 488 7788	New Zealand	1 488 7988

### Communications

IDD 966 IAC 00

### Emergency numbers

999 Ambulance 997



# SOMALIA



399

SOMALIA OCCUPIES MOST OF the northeast shoulder of the African continent. With nearly 2,000 miles of coast around the Horn of Africa, Somalia has the second longest coastline on the continent. The interior is mostly desert, with mountains to the north and plains to the south. With the exception of a few man-made ports, there are no natural harbours and even at the best of times there is little to attract cruising yachts to this country. Violent crime is common, especially in Mogadishu, while many other areas of Somalia are suffering from armed conflict. There is no functioning national government and parts of the country have seceded. Three separate entities were functioning independently of each other in 2009: Puntland, Somaliland and Somalia.

The Gulf of Aden and the waters surrounding the Horn of Africa have been plied by pirates since time immemorial, but the current situation is worse than ever with Somali pirates being so bold as to attack any vessel regardless of size – from cruise ships to supertankers, and even, to their own chagrin, naval ships. The international community has taken urgent measures to remedy the situation after pirates attacked a number of United Nations vessels carrying relief supplies. The waters around Somalia are patrolled by naval ships of various nations under the aegis of the United Nations, and a corridor has been designated that transiting vessels are advised to adhere to. Cruising boats have always been at risk when transiting this area and there have been a number of incidents involving yachts whose crews were abducted and eventually freed on payment of a large ransom. Two incidents involving French yachts in 2008 were brought to an end by commando attacks, resulting in the freeing of the captive sailors. Unfortunately, the skipper of a yacht lost his life during such an attack that also saw his captors killed.



## ◆ COUNTRY PROFILE

The Somalis have inhabited and traded in this area for many thousands of years. Greek and Arab writers called these people the Black Berbers, and the Egyptians called Mogadishu the Land of Punt. Following a period of colonial domination, Somalia became independent in 1960. After the regime collapsed in the 1990s, the nation descended into factional fighting and anarchy, including piracy.

The population of around 9.5 million is concentrated in the coastal towns. Somali is the official language, with Arabic, English and Italian also spoken by some. The capital is Mogadishu.

## ◆ CLIMATE

The climate is dictated by the two monsoons. It is hot all year round and also humid in the rainy seasons. The temperatures are very high in summer and can reach up to 42°C/108°F. At the height of the southwest monsoon, May to October, winds often reach gale force. The current along the Somali coast can be very strong, particularly during the southwest monsoon. The set changes in accordance with the direction of the monsoon.

## ◆ FORMALITIES

### PORTS OF ENTRY

Mogadishu	2°01' N 4°21' E
Berbera	10°27' N 45°01' E

Somalia is regarded as a failed state and while the chaotic situation continues, both its waters and the country itself should be avoided.

### Cruising Guide

Indian Ocean Cruising Guide

### Website

[www.somaligovernment.org](http://www.somaligovernment.org)

Local time	UTC +3
Buoyage	IALA A
Currency	Somali Shilling (SOS)
Electricity	220V, 50Hz

### Communications

IDD 252 IAC 00

# SRI LANKA

400



KNOWN AS TAPROBANE IN ANTIQUITY AND CEYLON IN COLONIAL TIMES, this large island that looks like a tear dropping off the tip of the Indian subcontinent is one of the oldest civilizations in the world. An island of fertile coastal plains and central highlands covered in forests, its interior abounds in ancient temples and palaces.

For many years Sri Lanka was a popular stopping point for yachts on their way to the Red Sea or the South Indian Ocean. Most came from South East Asia or the Pacific and only a few from the West. The troubles that have befallen the island recently have almost destroyed the tourist industry, and many sailors decided to keep away. Hopefully the end of the prolonged war in 2009 should change that.

Virtually all yachts that call at Sri Lanka do so at the old port of Galle, conveniently located on the island's southern tip. Very few boats cruise outside of Galle. The harbour of Trincomalee was out of bounds during the internal conflict, while Colombo's commercial harbour has no provisions for yachts.



## ◆ COUNTRY PROFILE

The rule by Sinhalese kings that lasted for 21 centuries came to an end with the arrival of the European colonial powers: Portuguese, Dutch and British. Early in the nineteenth century the island became a British colony. Gaining independence as Ceylon in 1948, the country changed its name to Sri Lanka in 1972. Increasingly violent clashes between the Sinhalese army and Tamil separatists, known as Tamil Tigers, descended into war. The Tigers' attempt to set up an independent Tamil state in the north was fiercely resisted by the government. In 2009 the government forces finally defeated the insurgents, but the deep wounds caused by the prolonged war will take a long time to heal.

The population of over 21 million is made up of a Sinhalese majority and Tamil minority. Sinhalese, Tamil and English are spoken. Colombo is the capital.

## ◆ CLIMATE

The climate is tropical, with two distinct monsoon seasons. Heavy rainfall along the western coast occurs during the southwest monsoon, particularly between May and September. The temperatures on the coast are usually high, while in the hills it is pleasant all year round. The island is occasionally affected by tropical cyclones, which develop in the Bay of Bengal – the worst months being November and December.

## ◆ FORMALITIES

### PORTS OF ENTRY

Galle 6°01' N 80°13' E      Colombo 6°57' N 79°51' E

**Galle:** Arriving yachts must contact Port Control before proceeding to anchor outside the harbour. During daylight hours Port Control usually allows yachts to proceed into the inner harbour and tie up to one of the new pontoons. As all vessels must use an agent to complete formalities, it is easier if one of the local agents is contacted one hour before one's ETA on Channels 69 or 71 as he will then deal with all officials and meet the yacht at the anchorage. Access into the harbour is not allowed during the hours of darkness.

All nationalities arriving on a yacht are granted a one-month visa on arrival.

## ◆ FACILITIES

A marina is under construction in Galle harbour, which will greatly improve the docking situation. Mechanical, electrical, engine, sail and glassfibre repair are available in Galle. There is fuel, but few marine supplies. Provisioning is limited, but good fresh produce is available.

### Cruising Guide

Indian Ocean Cruising Guide

### Website

[www.srilankatourism.org](http://www.srilankatourism.org)

### Local time

UTC +5.5

### Buoyage

IALA A

### Currency

Sri Lankan Rupee (LKR)

### Electricity

230V, 50Hz

### Diplomatic missions

UK	11 539 0639	Canada	11 522 6232
USA	11 249 8500	South Africa	11 268 9926
Australia	11 246 3200		

### Communications

IDD 94 IAC 00

### Emergency numbers

Ambulance 110 Police 118/119

# SUDAN



401

THE LARGEST COUNTRY IN AFRICA, bisected by the River Nile, Sudan is a land of contrasts: from the arid desert of the north to the tropical south. Sudan is the point where Arab and black African cultures meet and recent history has been beset by the grave tensions that underscore this.

Most sailors only come in contact with Port Sudan, the country's main port on the Red Sea. It is a convenient stop for yachts sailing up or down the Red Sea, although the harbour is dirty, crowded and has poor facilities. Boats coming from the south can find better conditions in Suakin, just south of Port Sudan. In the fifteenth century this was a major port and huge camel caravans brought copper, ivory, hides and slaves from the interior, returning with cotton, spices, silks and carpets. By the sixteenth century the harbour could hold 600 ships, but later Suakin proved too small for large ocean steamers. Today it is deserted, a sad ghost town of ruined buildings.

Port Sudan's position at the halfway mark of the Red Sea also marks the point where the winds change from prevailing southerlies to northerlies. Northbound yachts face an uphill beat from here all the way to Suez, while southbound boats usually have to fight contrary winds as far as Bab el Mandeb. If not in a hurry, the best tactic for northbound boats is to daysail inside the reefs, which extend parallel to the shore along most of the coastline. This makes life easier and also more pleasant, as the reef anchorages offer perfect shelter and the diving and fishing are superb.



## ◆ COUNTRY PROFILE

The ancient Egyptians called the lands to their south 'lands of the blacks', and they made occasional forays into them for ivory, ebony and slaves. In the nineteenth century Sudan was part of the Ottoman Empire and became an Anglo-Egyptian condominium in 1916. Since independence in 1956, an ongoing conflict between the Islamic north and non-Muslim rebels in the south has cost the lives of an estimated 2 million people. The latest crisis has resulted in millions of refugees seeking sanctuary in the Darfur enclave.

The population is 41 million. Northerners are mainly Arab Muslims, while the southerners are African Christians. Arabic is the official language, with many others in use. Khartoum is the capital.

## ◆ CLIMATE

The climate is tropical, and on the coast summers are very hot and winds mostly northerly. The winter months are very pleasant and the prevailing winds are from the south.

## ◆ FORMALITIES

On arrival, port control should be called on Channels 14 or 16. Officials speak little English and often demand an agent be used. All persons should remain on board until given shore passes. These should always be carried. A travel permit

## PORTS OF ENTRY

Port Sudan 19°37' N 37°14' E    Suakin 19°06' N 37°20' E

must be obtained to visit the interior. When clearing out, a permit for cruising the coastline should be requested. Formalities have been reported to be simpler if one arrives with a Sudanese visa.

## ◆ FACILITIES

Provisioning with fresh produce is very good in both ports. In Port Sudan there are also grocery shops and fuel is available. There is no bank in Suakin, only in Port Sudan. There are only limited repair facilities in Port Sudan, and none in Suakin.

## Cruising Guide

Red Sea Pilot

<b>Local time</b>	UTC +3	<b>Currency</b>	Sudanese Pound (SDG)
<b>Buoyage</b>	IALA A	<b>Electricity</b>	230V, 50Hz

## Diplomatic missions

UK	183 777 105	USA	183 774 701
Canada	183 563 670	South Africa	183 585 301

## Communications

IDD 249 IAC 00

## Emergency number

112

# UNITED ARAB EMIRATES



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THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES is a federation of seven independent states, with coastlines on the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman. Abu Dhabi is the largest, while Dubai, Ajman, Fujairah, Ras al-Khaimah, Sharjah, and Umm al-Qaiwain are known as the Northern States. The interior is mainly desert, but some areas of the coast are quite attractive and there is a growing interest in yachting, albeit mostly power. Although cruising opportunities are limited, a small number of foreign yachts venture into the area every year.

## ◆ COUNTRY PROFILE

There is evidence that the region was settled in the third millennium BCE, and was populated by nomadic herders and fishermen. Very little is known about the pre-Islamic period except that this was an important trading centre between the eastern and western worlds. A tribal confederation developed in Abu Dhabi in the late eighteenth century. In the early nineteenth century the Al Maktoum dynasty took control of Dubai. Formerly known as the Trucial States, the Emirates were under the military protection of Britain from 1853 to 1971, when six of the states became independent and known as the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Arabic is the official language, but English is widely spoken. Islamic law should be observed by foreign visitors, but all the states except Sharjah allow the consumption of

alcohol in private by non-Muslims. During Ramadan it is illegal to eat, drink or smoke in public.

The combined population is 4.8 million, although only one-fifth are Emirati, the majority being foreign workers. Dubai is the most populous of the Emirates, with almost 2.3 million inhabitants. Approximately 860,000 people live in Abu Dhabi, yet only 420,000 are native born and UAE citizens. Abu Dhabi is the federal capital, while the port of Dubai is the commercial centre.

## ◆ CLIMATE

**Dubai:** Dubai has an arid subtropical climate, with very hot summers and somewhat cooler winters. The hottest months are between June and September when temperatures can reach 45°C/113°F during the day and humidity levels are very high. Even the sea temperature touches on 40°C/104°F during the summer months. Temperatures are only slightly more moderate for the rest of the year, the coolest time being between December and March.

**Abu Dhabi:** Straddling the Tropic of Cancer, Abu Dhabi's climate is subtropical, with temperatures that vary from warm in the winter months to hot in the summer. The most pleasant month is December, with an average temperature of 20°C/68°F, while the hottest month is August, with an average temperature of 35°C/95°F.

Traditional dhows race in front of Dubai's Burj Al Arab.





◆ FORMALITIES

PORTS OF ENTRY

**Dubai:** Port Rashid 25°16N 55°17' E Jebel Ali 25°02' N 55°08' E

**Abu Dhabi:** Mina Zayed 24°29' N 54°22E

**Sharjah:** Khalid 25°22' N 55°23' E

**Ras al-Khaimah:** Mina Saqr 25°59' N 56°03' E

**Fujairah:** Port Fujairah 25°10' N 56°22' E

**Ajman:** Ajman Port 25°25' N 55°26' E

**Umm al-Qaiwain:** Ahmed Bin Rashid 25°35' N 55°35' E

**Dubai:** Yachts should call Dubai Port Control to obtain permission to proceed inside the creek to complete formalities. Nationalities of most countries can enter Dubai without a visa.



**Abu Dhabi:** Formalities are very simple and no visa is necessary for nationals of the UK, while nationals of most EU countries, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the USA are issued visas on arrival.

◆ FACILITIES

As there are a high number of locally owned yachts, facilities are of a good standard.

**Dubai:** There are several marinas, which are geared more for superyachts than cruising yachts. The Dubai Offshore Sailing Club is the most welcoming and offers free berthing to visiting vessels for one week. Repair facilities are very good, with workshops specializing in electrics, electronics, sail repairs and rigging.

**Abu Dhabi:** Port Zayed is in the process of an ambitious development plan, and is more used to commercial shipping and superyachts than smaller cruising yachts. There are three marinas: Abu Dhabi Marina, Abu Dhabi International Marine sports club, and Inter-Continental Marina. Repair facilities, as well as provisioning, are good.

◆ CHARTER

Based in Dubai, both Dusail and Duboats have a mixed fleet of sailing and power yachts for charter. Also operating in Dubai is Exclusive Yachts.

- www.dusail.com
- www.duboats.com
- www.xclusivelyachts.com

Websites

- www.dubaitourism.ae
- www.visitabudhabi.ae
- www.dosc.ae (Dubai Offshore Sailing Club)

<b>Local time</b>	UTC +4
<b>Buoyage</b>	IALA A
<b>Currency</b>	United Arab Emirates Dirham (AED)
<b>Electricity</b>	220V, 50Hz

Diplomatic missions

UK	Dubai 309 4444	Abu Dhabi 610 1100
USA	Dubai 311 6000	Abu Dhabi 414 2200
Australia	Dubai 508 7100	Abu Dhabi 634 6100
Canada	Dubai 314 5555	Abu Dhabi 694 0300
South Africa	Dubai 397 5222	Abu Dhabi 447 3446
New Zealand	Dubai 331 7500	

Communications

IDD Dubai 971 4	Abu Dhabi 971 2	IAC 00
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Emergency numbers

998/999

# YEMEN

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YEMEN HAS COASTS ON BOTH THE GULF OF ADEN AND RED SEA. In the past, the only port accessible to yachts was Aden. The situation seems to be improving and boats have been allowed to stop at ports on the Red Sea coast. Occasionally yachts also stop at the Jabal Zugar and Hamish Islands, mainly to shelter from the weather. This practice seems to be tolerated, although one should not go ashore. Socotra, lying off the Horn of Africa also belongs to Yemen. Its inhabitants have a fierce reputation, and mariners have always been advised to give the island a wide berth.

Aden has been an important port since ancient times and is still a useful stop on the way to or from the Red Sea. It is a busy commercial port, with little attraction for cruising yachts, mostly because of complicated formalities and the restriction of movements imposed on sailors. For these reasons, many yachts prefer to stop at Djibouti.

## ◆ COUNTRY PROFILE

The best known of the ancient kingdoms that ruled in Yemen was that of Queen Sheba. The fabled Queen travelled north to visit King Solomon, taking gifts of myrrh and frankincense, much prized luxuries in the ancient world which occurred naturally in Yemen. It was known to the Romans as Arabia Felix, because of the riches that its trade generated. During the nineteenth century the area was controlled by the Ottomans in the north and Britain in the south. Independence was achieved in 1962. After two decades of hostilities, the reunification of the People's Democratic Republic (South Yemen) and the Yemen Arab Republic (North Yemen) occurred in May 1990.

The Arab population is 24 million. Arabic is the official language, but English is spoken in Aden. The capital is Sana'a.



## ◆ CLIMATE

Yemen has a subtropical climate. May to September is the period of the southwest monsoon, when it is humid and rainy. October to February is drier and cooler, with easterly winds predominating.

## ◆ FORMALITIES

### PORTS OF ENTRY

Aden	12°48' N 44°58' E	Hodeidah	14°50' N 42°56' E
Mukalla	14°31' N 49°08' E		

The Coast Guard usually contacts vessels to identify them and is engaged in the campaign against Somali pirates.

**Aden:** Port Control should be contacted when outside the harbour entrance to find out where to anchor.

No visas are required for a short stay in the port area and shore passes are issued. If intending to go inland, a visa is required by all nationalities. In Aden it may be possible to obtain a cruising permit for the South Yemeni coast.

**Hodeidah:** Port Control should be contacted in advance to advise ETA, name of vessel and other details, otherwise the yacht may not be allowed into the port. The port is approached through a 10-mile-long channel.

**Mukalla:** Yachts have stopped at this port and been allowed to stay after obtaining shore passes through an agent.

## ◆ FACILITIES

In Aden only the National Dockyard has some repair facilities. Fuel is available. There are ATMs, supermarkets and good fresh produce markets in both Aden and Mukalla. The latter also has a range of repair facilities in the port area.

<b>Cruising Guide</b>	<b>Website</b>
Red Sea Pilot	<a href="http://www.yementourism.com">www.yementourism.com</a>

<b>Local time</b>	UTC +3
<b>Buoyage</b>	IALA A
<b>Currency</b>	Yemeni Rial (YER)
<b>Electricity</b>	230V, 50Hz

<b>Diplomatic missions</b>			
UK	1 308 100	South Africa	1 224 051
USA	1 755 2000		

<b>Communications</b>	<b>Emergency numbers</b>
IDD 967 IAC 00	Ambulance 191 Police 194